

THE FEBRUARY 2006 KENNECOTT EAGLE MINING APPLICATION REVISITED

May 2010

INTRODUCTION. This message is addressed directly to Rebecca Humphries (MDNRE), Wendy Melgin (EPA), David Gordon (FWS) and John Konik (USACE). They were involved in the handling of the Kennecott “Woodland Road” permit application – which was returned to sender as incomplete and otherwise not acceptable. That application was withdrawn by Kennecott a few days after the announced deadline – duly noted.

THE MESSAGE: Your observations, your comments and the action recommended came as a ray of hope that somewhere in the permitting system somebody might someday show an interest in integrity.

As some of you know I have been studying the original application for a permit to mine, dated Feb 2006, since April 2006, for a year and a half funded by NWF, since then without compensation. Somebody has to do it.

From the beginning I found the application to be incredibly sloppy, incomplete, inaccurate, founded on invalid assumptions, deceptive, intentionally fraudulent – and dangerous, threatening life, limb, property and environment. I recommended that it be returned to sender, collect.

For reasons yet to be explained the recommendation was ignored, but it has not changed.

With Stan Vitton of Michigan Tech I was responsible for reviewing geology, mining, rock mechanics and geotechnical aspects, but I also skimmed through geohydrology, the Humboldt Mill and the “Woodland Road” and found similar defects throughout. We were pleased to see that three Federal agencies recognized several of them in their “Woodland Road” review – beginning with the misleading title ...

A favored KEMC technique was to furnish doctored data to regulatory agencies and other reviewers instead of providing raw data – so ensuring favorable results.

More recently, as you have seen, KEMC has taken over the role of decision maker, (“Kennecott has determined”), giving instructions that permits were not needed or should now be issued. They are fast approaching an accomplished feat which would not be easy to reverse – despite the fact that they have been working on mining-related projects before obtaining all permits – for which there is a prescribed penalty – see attached airphoto, taken May 17th. They have wilfully failed to *demonstrate* that the plans presented in the application will work as planned – as required by law Part 632.

Anyway, setting aside emotions and opinions, **we, Parker and Vitton, mining engineers, seek an audience with your technical experts to look again at the original application and to bring to your attention the most grievous errors and deceptions – so that you can see them for yourselves – then act accordingly.**

If I had digital, editable copies of the documents I reviewed I could annotate them in context, but that would take a couple of months, working full time, and a bevy of secretaries. If we were shoulder-to-shoulder, as engineers, I think that the documents would sicken you and you would cry “Enough!” before the end of one full day.

Remember that Sainsbury, who was hired by MDEQ to help them understand the technical aspects of the application, said much the same thing – but his reports were suppressed and are still ignored – for good reason. Sainsbury was transferred by his employer, Itasca of Minneapolis, to Australia, before he could make a court appearance.

I believe that we, the people of Michigan, should handle the Eagle project with integrity, leading to responsible mining, for much more than the oft-quoted eight or ten years, so providing good jobs which are sorely needed. Otherwise I am certain that the mine, if KEMC plans are followed, will fail. It is obvious that those who drew up the plans and those who approved them knew little about mining.

My hope then is that we can reject the original application and start work on new and much better plans, without delay.

If we act now we can save a lot of time and money, and grief in days to come.

Can we do that, please?

Jack Parker (octogenarian)

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